

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 164137

STADIS/////////
FOR AMBASSADOR LEWIS FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: EAIR, IS, US

SUBJECT: THE POLITICAL DIMENSION OF THE U.S.-ISRAELI CIVIL
AIR NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TEL AVIV 8039

1. I FULLY UNDERSTAND AND SHARE YOUR CONCERN OVER POLITICAL
ASPECTS OF CIVAIR TALKS. THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE PROMPTED
BY RECOGNITION OF DOMESTIC AND BILATERAL POLITICAL INTERESTS
IN EXPANDING EL AL'S ROUTES TO THE U.S. AND LOGIC OF CUR-
RENT USG AVIATION POLICY TO FOSTER COMPETITION. DEPT HAS
BEEN PRIME MOVER BEHIND THESE TALKS AND WILL DO EVERYTHING
POSSIBLE TO ARRIVE AT A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME. WE HAVE ASSUMED
AMIT AND OTHER SENIOR GOI OFFICIALS WERE AWARE OF DEPART-
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MENT'S ROLE RE INITIATION OF TALKS.

2. U.S. NEGOTIATING PARAMETERS HAVE RECEIVED HIGH LEVEL
ATTENTION. UNDER SECRETARY RICHARD N. COOPER CHAIRED INTER-
AGENCY POLICY DISCUSSION ON U.S.-ISRAEL CIVIL AVIATION.
PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS TO PREPARE GUIDANCE FOR NEGOTIATORS
WHO ARE FULLY AWARE OF POLITICAL DIMENSION OF THESE TALKS

COMING JUST BEFORE VICE PRESIDENT'S TRIP. WE ARE ALSO COPING WITH PRESSURE FROM CONGRESSIONAL AS WELL AS DOMESTIC LOCAL INTERESTS IN NEGOTIATING WITH ISRAELIS.

3. YOU CAN BE ASSURED WE WILL KEEP THE OVERALL POLITICAL CONTEXT VERY MUCH IN MIND AS WE TRY TO BRIDGE THE DIFFERENCES WHICH SEPARATE US. THIS WILL TAKE SOME REAL EFFORT ON BOTH SIDES HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF ISRAELI LATEST REQUEST FOR A TOTAL OF TWELVE GATEWAYS IN RETURN FOR APPARENT WILLINGNESS TO MEET OUR POSITION ON FARES AND CHARTER LIBERALIZATION.

4. RE HART/MCBRIDE TELECON, IT IS DIFFICULT TO PROVIDE INTERPRETIVE REPORTING OF EACH DAY'S NEGOTIATION SINCE EBB AND FLOW OF TALKS ARE SUCH THAT ARTIFICIALLY DIVIDING THEM INTO DAYS MAY GIVE FALSE IMPRESSION OF CONFRONTATION, STALEMATE, OR IMMINENT FAILURE AT DAY'S END WHICH EVAPORATES BY NEXT MORNING'S SESSION. WE WILL REPORT AS BEST WE CAN SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY OCCUR, ON AN EPISODIC BASIS KEEPING IN MIND EMBASSY'S NEED TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE BASIC STATE OF PLAY.

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